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Kelly D. Bailey

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EXAMINER

SAUNDERS JR, JOSEPH

ART UNIT

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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/840,196	<b>Applicant(s)</b> BAILEY, KELLY D.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Joseph Saunders	<b>Art Unit</b> 2614	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 August 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,8-13,15,16,20,21,25 and 26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,8-13,15,16,20,21,25 and 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 May 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the communications filed August 20, 2008.

Claims 1 – 3, 8 – 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, and 26 are currently pending and considered below.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 2, 9 – 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawamoto (US 6,361,439 B1), hereinafter Kawamoto, in view of Okabe et al. (US 6,572,475), hereinafter Okabe, and Cascone et al. (US 6,959,094), hereinafter Cascone.

**Claim 1:** Kawamoto discloses a method for providing spatial sound data associated with a fast moving object (projectile) in a scene for a virtual environment, comprising: determining at least one of position, distance and direction for the object in regard to a point of view in the scene (Figure 2 Step 2); recording spatial sound data in at least two channels of an audio file associated with the object, wherein the recorded spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction of the object in regard to the point of view in the scene (Figure 2 Step 2 and Figure 3); and

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playing the spatial sound data in at least one of the at least two channels of the audio file associated with the object, wherein the playing of the spatial sound data simulates sound associated with the object from the point of view in the scene (Figure 2 Step 4).

Kawamoto does not disclose that the recorded spatial sound data includes spatial approaching sound data recorded in one channel and spatial retreating sound data in another channel of the audio file.

Okabe describes in chronological an example of the relationship between a display parameter and an audio parameter in a virtual game space wherein car A (fast moving object) passes the players car (fast moving object) during the game (Figure 7). Okabe illustrates that different sound effects including “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are linked to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, i.e., “the image of car A behind appearing on the review mirror becomes larger” and “car a moves further ahead”, respectively (Column 11 Lines 45 – 60). While Okabe also does not explicitly state that the sounds of “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are recorded with the Doppler effect, Cascone teaches that it is well known in the art of computer-implemented games and simulations involving vehicle sounds where, “one known technique for generating such vehicle sounds uses a set of digitized recordings of the vehicle’s sound under a few specific conditions” and further teaches “In order for a game or simulation to allow for a variety of vehicle types, a very large number of recordings must be made under a large number

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of different vehicle operating conditions, and all the recordings must be stored,"

Background of the Invention Column 1 Lines 20 - 57.

It is noted, that while Cascone goes on to teach processing sound by generating and/or synthesizing to reduce the memory storage space requirements by utilizing mixers and equalizers to independently control separate components of a sound, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would recognize that if memory storage space is not a limiting factor than storing very large number of recordings is advantageous in reducing further processing. Further, even in the case where generating and/or synthesizing is utilized by Cascone the processing still relies on recorded sounds.

Therefore, given the teachings of Kawamoto of storing spatial sound data in at least two channels, wherein the recorded spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction; and given the example of Okabe of linking spatial approaching sounds and spatial retreating sounds to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, in addition to the teachings of Cascone of using recorded sounds for different vehicle conditions; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use record the vehicle sounds as disclosed by Cascone necessary to produce the approaching and retreating Doppler effects as disclosed by Okabe by storing the sounds in at least two channels based on position as disclosed by Kawamoto, thereby realizing the claimed invention and aforementioned advantages.

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**Claim 2:** Kawamoto , Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 1, wherein the point of view is at least one of a character in the scene, a third person perspective, and another character in the scene (Kawamoto, "listening position in virtual game space," Column 2 Lines 1 – 8, also Okabe, player's car, Figure 7).

**Claim 9:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 1, further comprising mixing the spatial sound data in the at least two channels of the audio file based at least in part on distance, position and direction of the object in regard to at least in part the point of view and a type of the object (As the position of the car A changes in relationship to the position of the player's car in the example of Okabe, the combined invention of Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone plays back the recorded approaching and retreating Doppler effects according to position thereby mixing the spatial sound data).

**Claim 10:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 9, but do not disclose wherein the mixing further comprises performing at least one of linear mixing, parametric mixing, and spectrum analyzer mixing. The office takes official notice that it is well known in the art that when mixing or equalizing sounds as disclosed by Cascone to use linear mixing, parametric mixing, and/ or spectrum analyzer mixing, with the use of equalizers during the mixing process to provide the benefit of boosting or cutting lows or highs during the mix. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use this type of mixing setup in the system of

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Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone to thereby achieve the effect of attenuating high frequencies and amplifying low frequencies using a digital signal processor as disclosed by Kawamoto in Column 1 Lines 60 – 66.

**Claim 11:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 9, wherein the mixing further comprises performing at least one of cross fading and blending of the at least two channels of the audio file ("cross-fade", Cascone Figure 5).

**Claim 12:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 1, wherein the audio file further includes a format of at least one of Windows Audio Video (WAV), Audio Interchange File Format (AIFF), MPEG (MPX), Sun Audio (AU), Real Networks (RN), Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), QuickTime Movie (QTM), and AC3 (compressed MPEG AUDIO, Okabe Column 7 Lines 27 – 43).

**Claim 13:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose method of claim 1, wherein the virtual environment is at least one of a video game, chat room, and a virtual world ("game", Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone).

**Claim 15:** Kawamoto discloses a method for playing spatial sound data associated with a fast moving object (projectile) in a scene for a virtual environment, comprising: recording sound data in at least two channels of an audio file based at least in part on distance, position and direction of an object in regard to a point of view in the scene

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(Figure 2 Step 2 and Figure 3); and playing the spatial sound data in at least one of the at least two channels of the audio file associated with the object, wherein the playing of the spatial sound data is based at least in part on distance, position and direction of the object in regard to the point of view in the scene, and wherein the playing of the spatial sound data enables the simulation of sound associated with the object from the point of view in the scene (Figure 2 Step 4). Kawamoto does not disclose mixing spatial sound and further does not disclose wherein the spatial sound data includes spatial approaching sound data recorded in one channel of the audio file and spatial retreating sound data recorded in another channel of the audio file.

Okabe describes in chronological an example of the relationship between a display parameter and an audio parameter in a virtual game space wherein car A (fast moving object) passes the players car (fast moving object) during the game (Figure 7). Okabe illustrates that different sound effects including “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are linked to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, i.e., “the image of car A behind appearing on the review mirror becomes larger” and “car a moves further ahead”, respectively (Column 11 Lines 45 – 60). While Okabe also does not explicitly state that the sounds of “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are recorded with the Doppler effect, Cascone teaches that it is well known in the art of computer-implemented games and simulations involving vehicle sounds where, “one known technique for generating such vehicle



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sounds uses a set of digitized recordings of the vehicle's sound under a few specific conditions" and further teaches "In order for a game or simulation to allow for a variety of vehicle types, a very large number of recordings must be made under a large number of different vehicle operating conditions, and all the recordings must be stored,"

Background of the Invention Column 1 Lines 20 - 57.

It is noted, that while Cascone goes on to teach processing sound by generating and/or synthesizing to reduce the memory storage space requirements by utilizing mixers and equalizers to independently control separate components of a sound, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would recognize that if memory storage space is not a limiting factor than storing very large number of recordings is advantageous in reducing further processing. Further, even in the case where generating and/or synthesizing is utilized by Cascone the processing still relies on recorded sounds.

Therefore, given the teachings of Kawamoto of storing spatial sound data in at least two channels, wherein the recorded spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction; and given the example of Okabe of linking spatial approaching sounds and spatial retreating sounds to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, in addition to the teachings of Cascone of using recorded sounds for different vehicle conditions; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use record the vehicle sounds as disclosed by Cascone necessary to produce the approaching and retreating Doppler effects as disclosed by Okabe by storing the

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sounds in at least two channels based on position as disclosed by Kawamoto, thereby realizing the claimed invention and aforementioned advantages.

**Claim 16:** Kawamoto discloses a server (game machine) for enabling the playing of spatial sound data associated with a fast moving object (projectile) in a scene in a virtual environment (Figure 1), comprising: a memory (audio data memory unit 3) for storing data; and an audio engine (main controller 1) for performing actions, including: enabling the determining of at least one of position, distance and direction for the object based at least in part on a point of view in the scene and a type of the object (Figure 2 Step 2); enabling the recording of spatial sound data in at least two channels of an audio file associated with the object, wherein the recorded spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction of the object; (Figure 2 Step 2 and Figure 3) and enabling the playing of the spatial sound data in at least one of the at least two channels of the audio file associated with the object, wherein the playing of the spatial sound data simulates sound associated with the object from the point of view in the scene (Figure 2 Step 4).

Kawamoto does not disclose that the recorded spatial sound data includes spatial approaching sound data recorded in one channel and spatial retreating sound data in another channel of the audio file.

Okabe describes in chronological an example of the relationship between a display parameter and an audio parameter in a virtual game space wherein car A (fast moving object) passes the players car (fast moving object) during the game (Figure 7).

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Okabe illustrates that different sound effects including “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are linked to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, i.e., “the image of car A behind appearing on the review mirror becomes larger” and “car a moves further ahead”, respectively (Column 11 Lines 45 – 60). While Okabe also does not explicitly state that the sounds of “the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)” and “the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)” are recorded with the Doppler effect, Cascone teaches that it is well known in the art of computer-implemented games and simulations involving vehicle sounds where, “one known technique for generating such vehicle sounds uses a set of digitized recordings of the vehicle’s sound under a few specific conditions” and further teaches “In order for a game or simulation to allow for a variety of vehicle types, a very large number of recordings must be made under a large number of different vehicle operating conditions, and all the recordings must be stored,” Background of the Invention Column 1 Lines 20 - 57.

It is noted, that while Cascone goes on to teach processing sound by generating and/or synthesizing to reduce the memory storage space requirements by utilizing mixers and equalizers to independently control separate components of a sound, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would recognize that if memory storage space is not a limiting factor than storing very large number of recordings is advantageous in reducing further processing. Further, even in the case where

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generating and/or synthesizing is utilized by Cascone the processing still relies on recorded sounds.

Therefore, given the teachings of Kawamoto of storing spatial sound data in at least two channels, wherein the recorded spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction; and given the example of Okabe of linking spatial approaching sounds and spatial retreating sounds to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, in addition to the teachings of Cascone of using recorded sounds for different vehicle conditions; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use record the vehicle sounds as disclosed by Cascone necessary to produce the approaching and retreating Doppler effects as disclosed by Okabe by storing the sounds in at least two channels based on position as disclosed by Kawamoto, thereby realizing the claimed invention and aforementioned advantages.

**Claim 21** is substantially similar in scope to claim 16 and therefore rejected on the same grounds.

**Claims 20 and 25** are substantially similar in scope to claims 9 and therefore are rejected on the same grounds.

**Claim 26** is substantially similar in scope to claims 1, 15, 16 and 21 and therefore rejected on the same grounds.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone in view of Nakagawa (US 6,760,050 B1), hereinafter Nakagawa.

**Claim 3:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 1, but do not disclose the method further comprising determining a type of the object based at least in part on the point of view in the scene. Nakagawa discloses a method of producing sound in a virtual environment and discloses determining the type of object based in part on the coordinates and then uses the type, for example a sound-reflecting object or wall, and the coordinates to generate the appropriate sound data (Figure 3). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the steps taught by Nakagawa into the invention of Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone thereby allowing for sounds particular to a respective object to be audible from prescribed positions and from prescribed directions (Column 14 Lines 48 – 64).

5. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone in view of Jahnke (US 2005/0179701), hereinafter Jahnke.

**Claim 8:** Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone disclose the method of claim 1, but do not disclose wherein the spatial approaching sound data is played in one sound amplification device and the spatial retreating sound data is played in another sound

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amplification device. Jahnke discloses, "The first characteristic of high performance game systems is a positional audio scheme. A positional audio system performs dynamic channel gain/attenuation based on the user input and character perspective on a screen in real time. Multi-channel speaker systems typically include five main speakers, a front left, center, and front right speaker, plus a rear left and a rear right speaker. Such systems also include a separate subwoofer, which is a non-positional speaker for bass reproduction. Such an audio system with five main speakers and subwoofer is referred to as a `5.1 level` system," [0004]. Therefore, given that Okabe discloses, "the image of car A behind appearing on the review mirror becomes larger" and "car a moves further ahead", it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use a 5.1 level system as disclosed by Jahnke and mix the approaching sounds of Kawamoto, Okabe, and Cascone to the Rear Center 607, Figure 6 of Jahnke, and the retreating sounds to the Center 602, thereby allowing for a heightened sense of realism.

### ***Response to Arguments***

6. Applicant's arguments filed August 20, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In review of Applicant's arguments, the Examiner does not contend the first statement, "The Office Action acknowledges that "Kawamoto does not disclose that the recorded spatial sound data includes spatial approaching sound data recorded in one channel and spatial retreating sound data in another channel of the audio file",

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since the important feature of Kawamoto is how spatial sounds are stored in a game environment.

Applicant then asserts the second statement, "The Office Action also acknowledges that "Okabe does not explicitly state that the sounds of 'the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)' and 'the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)' are **recorded** with the Doppler effect", however emphasis has been added to recorded since Okabe does disclose the claimed "spatial approaching sound" and the claimed "spatial retreating sound" but does not disclose that it is recorded or later as agreed by Applicant "Okabe is silent with respect to how the Doppler effect is implemented".

As stated by Applicant, "The Office Action turns to Cascone". The Examiner has turned to Cascone to teach how to implement the Doppler effect already disclosed by Okabe. Applicant argues that "Cascone does not even mention the Doppler effect, much less suggest that sounds be recorded to account for the Doppler effect", and while this is true, the key aspect here is that Cascone does not need to specifically show the Doppler effect since this has already been disclosed by Okabe. Cascone is only relied upon to show how to implement an effect such as the Doppler effect of Okabe in a game environment. Therefore, the Examiner respectfully disagrees that the references in combination fail to disclose the claimed invention since Cascone was clearly shown in the rejection to teach storing a large number of recorded sound effects as described in the background of the invention. As stated in the rejection "given the teachings of Kawamoto of storing spatial sound data in at least two channels, wherein the recorded

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spatial sound data is based at least in part on at least one of position, distance, and direction; and given the example of Okabe of linking spatial approaching sounds and spatial retreating sounds to the position, distance, or direction of the cars within the virtual game space, in addition to the teachings of Cascone of using recorded sounds for different vehicle conditions; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use record the vehicle sounds as disclosed by Cascone necessary to produce the approaching and retreating Doppler effects as disclosed by Okabe by storing the sounds in at least two channels based on position as disclosed by Kawamoto, thereby realizing the claimed invention and aforementioned advantages".

While Applicant also argues that Cascone teaches away, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Cascone does not teach away but teaches two alternative approaches, each with their own advantage. This was also discussed in the rejection, "It is noted, that while Cascone goes on to teach processing sound by generating and/or synthesizing to reduce the memory storage space requirements by utilizing mixers and equalizers to independently control separate components of a sound, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would recognize that if memory storage space is not a limiting factor than storing very large number of recordings is advantageous in reducing further processing. Further, even in the case where generating and/or synthesizing is utilized by Cascone the processing still relies on recorded sounds". That is, while synthesizing has the advantage of reducing the amount of memory storage space requirements it is at the expense of additional processing power. Whereas,



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storing a large number of recordings has the advantage of reduced processing power at the expense of requiring additional storage capacity.

On a further note, similar teachings of using recorded sound instead of synthesized sounds were also taught by Gehring in regards to now cancelled claim 6. Given the similarity of the teachings of Gehring and Cascone, the teachings of Gehring could easily be used in place of Cascone. As stated in the previous rejection of now cancelled claim 6, "Gehring discloses that in a three-dimensional video game (Column 3 Line 27) it is advantageous to record preprocessed versions of sound from different directions and then based on positional coordinated form an application mix the appropriate sounds so as to be perceived by the listener as coming from specified three-dimensional spatial locations, thereby providing an economical solution by reducing processing requirements (Abstract, Figures 3 – 5 and correspond descriptions). Therefore, given the discloser of Gehring, it would have been obvious to record forward and rearward directional sound in the invention of Kawamoto, thereby allowing for the realism of a three-dimensional video game with economical advantages,". Again given the need for sounds of 'the engine sound of car A becomes gradually higher (Doppler Effect)' and 'the engine sound becomes gradually lower (Doppler Effect)' in the game of Okabe and the lack of implementation, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art given the teachings of Gehring and Kawamoto above, that the recorded preprocessed three-dimensional sounds of Gehring applied to Kawamoto could easily be the recorded preprocessed engine sounds as

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required by Okabe, thereby implemented the engine sounds of Okabe with reduced processing requirements.

### ***Conclusion***

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph Saunders whose telephone number is (571) 270-1063. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on (571) 272-7499. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/J. S./

Examiner, Art Unit 2614

/CURTIS KUNTZ/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2614